

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 22

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
4 January 1977

CIA literature enriched by Cline's objective 'blueprint'

Secrets, Spies and Scholars: Blueprint of the Essential CIA, by Ray S. Cline. Washington: Acropolis Books. \$10.

By Joseph C. Harsch

First we had a flood of romanticized and often highly fictionalized accounts of the achievements of America's well-known "spy" agency — the both famous, and later, in some minds infamous, CIA (Central Intelligence Agency).

Then, of recent date, we had a flood of "disclosures" about the same CIA which were in many ways all too true, but also often fictionalized, exaggerated, distorted, and sometimes deliberately damaging.

Books

What was needed and what we now have for the first time is a broad and analytical account of the CIA from its origins in the World War II OSS (Office of Strategic Services) down to the present day. It was written by someone who served in the agency from the beginning, knows both its faults and its virtues and tells the story as objectively as a good CIA agent should.

Ray Cline served in OSS during World War II. He moved over into CIA when it was set up. In the beginning he was a mere cryptographer. In the end he was the top deputy for intelligence evaluation and estimates. He was in line to be director at the time Richard Helms won the competition. That was his good fortune, although he may not have appreciated it at the time. Mr. Helms served Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, and came to grief in the process.

Timing seen right

Mr. Cline transferred to the State Department and then to Georgetown University, from whence he can look back with mingled affection and criticism on the service to which he gave most of his active life. He is the only person yet to write the story who has served in all branches of the CIA from overt to covert and from bottom to top. It is the right time for such a book. It is must reading for anyone who wants the CIA story in objective perspective.

Essentially, as Mr. Cline tells the story, the CIA has been the victim of its two earliest clandestine successes. In 1953 the Shah of Iran was driven out of his country by his Soviet-supported Prime Minister, Mohammed Mossadegh. The CIA took on the job of putting the Shah back on his throne — and succeeded. In 1954 a shipload of Czech weapons was discovered on its way to Guatemala. The CIA was given the task of preventing those weapons from becoming the property of a Soviet-leaning regime in Guatemala. It organized a revolution against President Arbenz Guzman and supported it with three P-47 fighter planes left over from World War II. The Guzman regime crumbled. Castillo Armas was installed in his place. Guatemala has been in the American orbit ever since.

Two easy successes

According to Mr. Cline these were the only two political actions resulting in a change of regime which took place during the entire eight years of the "Dulles era" (John Foster Dulles at State and Allen Dulles at CIA). But they were quick, cheap, and easy successes. They established "the mystique of CIA's secret power."

"The tragedy is that the concept of what CIA was intended to be, became gravely distorted by the image projected as a result of the Iranian and Guatemalan capers," Mr. Cline writes.

The prime original function of CIA was to "stem the disorderly flood of advice based on military and diplomatic hopes and fears" and instead give the President a steady flow of objective information based on the "evidence available from all sources with no vested interest in either foreign policy or military policy and no bias except toward establishing the truth as well as it can be perceived."

The Iran and Guatemala "capers" distracted attention in Washington from this first and essential purpose. It had all seemed so easy to change those two regimes. So those two cheap successes led on into two big and expensive fiascos. In 1958 the CIA tried to overthrow President Sukarno of Indonesia. In 1961 it tried to get rid of Fidel Castro by the

Bay of Pigs landing in Cuba. Both ended in disasters. But the damage was not over. Both Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon had accepted the myth of what CIA could do by clandestine means. They gave the CIA both impossible and improper tasks.

Clumsy interventions

We all know the sad ending of the story: attempted assassinations (all of which, says Mr. Cline, failed), spying on American citizens, and interventions in Chile and Italy so clumsy and excessive that they were exposed and have concerted the word "CIA" into a Soviet propaganda asset.

So what is to be done about it? Mr. Cline's recommendations seem eminently sensible to me. Divorce the spying, which is at best of marginal value, from intelligence and evaluation. Set up the prime function of intelligence in the present CIA building at Langley, minus the police dogs and wire fences. Open it up. Let it operate openly. Give it the sole responsibility of putting sound and objective intelligence before the President. Then bury such secret activities as may be wanted from time to time off in the various military services where they used to be and should go again. The label, CIA, once so proudly worn by a generation of devoted agents, has to go. It is too tarnished by folly, fiasco, and Watergate.

Joseph C. Harsch is a Monitor columnist.